

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6322

C 33 L 08

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Revising the definition of a weapon.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Judiciary (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, Fairley and Kline; by request of Board For Judicial Administration).

Senate Committee on Judiciary

House Committee on Judiciary

Background: It is a gross misdemeanor to enter certain locations when in knowing possession or control of a weapon. Weapons are prohibited in restricted areas of court facilities, including courtrooms, jury rooms, judge's chambers, offices and areas used to conduct court business, waiting areas, and corridors adjacent to areas used in connection with court proceedings.

The weapons prohibition in court facilities does not apply to: (1) a person engaged in official military duties; (2) law enforcement personnel, except in some circumstances when the law enforcement officer is present in a courthouse as a party to actions relating to protection orders; or (3) security personnel while engaged in official duties.

A weapon is defined as any firearm, explosive, or instrument or weapon listed in another dangerous weapons statute, e.g., slung shot, sand club, metal knuckles, and various types of knives. Specifically, prohibited knives include:

- a spring blade knife;
- any knife the blade of which is automatically released by a spring mechanism or other mechanical device; and
- any knife having a blade which opens, falls, or is ejected into position by the force of gravity, or by an outward, downward, or centrifugal thrust or movement.

The referenced dangerous weapons statute creates a penalty for possession of certain other weapons such as a dagger, dirk, or pistol only when the weapon is carried furtively "with intent to conceal."

Summary: The definition of weapons that may not be brought into areas of any building used in connection with court proceedings is amended. Instead of referencing the definition of "weapon" contained in another dangerous weapons statute, prohibited weapons are specified. The new list of prohibited weapons includes all previously excluded items, as well as any knife, dagger, dirk, or other similar weapon that is capable of causing death or bodily injury and is commonly used with the intent to cause death or bodily injury. In no instance is the prohibition limited to a weapon carried furtively with intent to conceal.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate 45 3

House 95 0

Effective: June 12, 2008